## **Redistricting Group Public Hearing Journal**

Wednesday, March 21, 2012 - 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.
University of Minnesota Urban Research and Outreach
Engagement Center (UROC)
2001 Plymouth Avenue North
Minneapolis, Minnesota
612-626-8762

**Redistricting Group Members Present**: Clegg (Chair), Bad Heart Bull, Brown, Cohen, Cole, Connell, Dolan, Ferrara, Johnson, Kozak, Lickness, Massey, Metge, Peltola, Rubenstein, Sandberg, Schwarzkopf, Thaden, Unni

- 1. Introduction and Orientation to Redistricting
- 2. Presentation of Draft Maps

Chair Clegg called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m. He summarized the redistricting process and the format to be followed during the public hearing. He noted that the proposed map had to be published in Finance and Commerce seven days prior to the public hearings. However, during that week, the Operations Committee had met and further refined the proposed map. This map had not been approved by the full Redistricting Group. This map will be presented to the full Redistricting Group on Thursday, March 22.

## 3. Acceptance of Public Testimony

- a) Ray Roybal, 4937 Aldrich Avenue, stated that he was Chicano, which means Mexican American. He saw very few activists in the crowd from North Minneapolis, which didn't surprise him. The people he has talked to don't think anything will happen. Chicanos are not Latinos and are not Somalis. They are American citizens and deserve the same rights as anyone else. Through the civil rights movement we learned that the gerrymandering schemes don't work. He did not care what color people were. The condition of the community is worse than it was 30 years ago. People are drawing their own maps to get their own representatives elected. He did not need a Somali representative in City Hall. He just needs a representative in City Hall.
- b) Becki Smith, 511 4th Avenue Southeast, stated that she did not wish to speak.
- c) Vida Ditter, 404 Thomas Avenue South, thanked the Redistricting Group for their work and stated that she lived in the Bryn Mawr Neighborhood in Ward 7. Until the state legislative map was released, Bryn Mawr had been placed intact into Ward 7. However, after the legislative map was released, the Ward 7 boundary was moved south of the neighborhood boundary. This move will result in Bryn Mawr having to solicit support from two council members and two park commissioners as implementation moves forward on the Bassett Creek Master Plan and the Bryn Mawr Land Use Plan. They appealed to the Secretary of State's Office, and they were told that an appeal could only be made by official government representatives. The City Clerk appealed on behalf of Bryn Mawr but it was rejected. Informally, Bryn Mawr was told that there was no reason for the change to be made at the state level as the change could and should be made at the city level. They were advised to come back to the Redistricting Group and request

the change. They were told that since there is no population involved in the area of the requested change, it would be a simple matter of bringing the ward boundary to the neighborhood line. This will not affect any other ward line and no populations would be moved with the change. Compared to the Redistricting Group's hard work and hours spent adjusting other ward lines to create the fairest wards, this request was a simple adjustment. This change would mean that Bryn Mawr could work with only one council member, park commissioner, and school board member as they advocate and move toward implementation of the two plans affecting that section of their neighborhood.

- **d) Steven Pundt, 456 Newton Avenue South**, stated that one of the goals of redistricting is to balance population. The small change requested by the Bryn Mawr Neighborhood does not affect a single person. They were asking that the park district and ward boundaries follow the neighborhood boundary, which is Bassett Creek.
- e) Kathy Sakora, 2801 South 9th Street, stated that she lived in the Seward Neighborhood and moved here from Chicago where she was a high school teacher. Seward Neighborhood is a diverse neighborhood. They have worked since the 1960's to create a neighborhood that has multiple cultures. They have been welcoming to all. They have developed a housing project that houses East African. They have worked to make the neighborhood as good as it can be. They have done well in achieving their goals. It is what America should be. The Seward Neighborhood has worked hard and offers so much to the entire neighborhood. The gerrymandering that is taking place is appalling. She asked that the Seward Neighborhood be kept whole.
- f) Elmi Abdirashi (sp?), 2515 South 9th Street, stated that the Seward Neighborhood is a great place to live. There is not too much crime. It is not a good idea to split the neighborhood. He would like Seward to stay together.
- g) Mary Merrill Anderson, 1144 Cedar View, stated that she was present to speak about Ward 8, the neighborhood she grew up in. The proposed map decimates Ward 8. It takes out the heart and soul of that community. It removes the Sabathani Community Center from Ward 8 as well as the 4th Avenue corridor that was built by that community a long time ago. This area of the city was one of the first places where African Americans were welcome. The city is currently 40% people of color. Of the 13 wards, only 2 of them have an opportunity to elect a person of color. The 11 other wards have a significantly White majority. The Central Neighborhood needs to be back in Ward 8.
- h) Michael Trdan, 2524 35th Avenue South, Co-President of the Seward Neighborhood Group, stated that he was in opposition to the proposed map specifically because it tears the neighborhood asunder and will make the work of the Seward Neighborhood Group much more difficult because it will have more council members to lobby. If you believe a strong city is a result of strong neighborhoods, then the new ward map should try to preserve strong neighborhoods. Looking at the proposed map, it is the inner ring neighborhoods that are being divided. These are neighborhoods that should be given every opportunity to be strengthened.
- i) Matthew Perrault, 100 3rd Avenue South, stated that he currently lived in Ward 7 and what was proposed to be Ward 3. The map proposed by the Operations Committee splitting the Downtown West Neighborhood is a big mistake. He appreciated all the work of the Redistricting Group, and he realized that when one change is made to the map it affected all the other wards; however, putting the line across 4th Street takes Block E out of the downtown area that directly affects North Loop, Downtown East, and that portion around Washington. The block where he

lives is directly affected by what happens on Block E. That area is not really related to Bryn Mawr. It is a completely different community. He proposed that the line be on 10th Street or 7th Street, which is what was proposed on the March 20 map. The downtown Block E area, the theatres, the arts should all be kept together as one community of interest.

- j) William Kindem, 2910 East Franklin, Seward Towers East, stated that this was the first time he had heard about the proposed maps and he had become quite interested. He agreed with previous speakers Ray Roybal and Mike Trdan. He didn't have much else to add except his love for the Seward Neighborhood and to preserve it as much as possible. He would like to be involved finding a way to satisfy the majority of the people.
- **k)** Ali Egal, 416 Cedar Avenue, stated that he supported the proposed map because it will help the Seward area and the Cedar Riverside area and it is important that they get representation.
- I) Doris Spencer, 4348 4th Avenue South, had signed up to speak but was not present when her name was called.
- m) Delores Dennard, 4116 Portland Avenue, stated that she had attended a meeting held by Council Member Glidden on February 24 where she displayed the map as it looked at that time. However, nothing has been explained to them about the impact of these changes. The current proposed map is unacceptable. It will not serve the best interests of residents of South Minneapolis or the city as a whole. The current Ward 8 is made up of communities that are connected socially, politically, and economically. They are racially, ethnically, and economically diverse. Ward 8 has been the heart of the African American community in South Minneapolis. African Americans have worked with each other in coalition and in cooperation with others to elect leadership including the city council and also state, house, and senate members, including Minnesota's first African American female state legislator, Neva Walker, as well as the first Minneapolis African American Mayor. At a minimum the core African American communities in the Central, Bryant, Regina, and Field must be preserved in one ward. Putting the ward boundary along 38th Street will make development difficult. It will be one more division in a community that has continually been divided over the years by the freeway and the loss of the businesses at 4th Avenue and 38th Street and it will separate the remaining institutions including Sabathani Community Center, the Urban League, and Field School. She wanted the current ward to stay together.
- n) Anthony Pahnke, 3648 Elliot Avenue, stated that there was a change in the map proposed for the public hearing and the later version that the Operations Committee is discussing concerning Wards 9 and 6. He felt it would make sense to include all of Midtown Phillips in Ward 9 because the Midtown Phillips Neighborhood Association has already approved the We All Win redistricting plan. The Powderhorn Neighborhood Association has also approved the We All Win plan. There is a predominantly Latino school in that area and a lot of businesses in that area such as the Global Market. It makes sense to put the whole area in Ward 9. He suggested omitting the Longfellow area which is mostly residential and include more commercial areas to get more business representation into Ward 9.
- o) Matt Perry, 4205 Colfax Avenue South, currently Ward 13, stated that East Harriet has more of a community connection with those neighborhoods around the lake. He completely agreed with the speakers who talked about the African American community and how they will be negatively affected by having Central pulled out of Ward 8 and East Harriet put in.

- p) Happy Reynolds, 1916 15th Avenue South, Ward 6, stated that she lived in Ventura Village. It was upsetting to her to look at what the Redistricting Group is trying to do. Splitting up Seward is ridiculous. Seward is an excellent neighborhood. Splitting up Seward destroys a lot of what the Somali community has done, as well as what the neighbors are doing. Either let all of Seward be in Ward 6 or let all of it be in Ward 2. Also, why would the Redistricting Group split Elliot Park? Ward 6 is also losing Whittier. She is hearing most people say their neighborhoods want to be together. Splitting up neighborhoods takes away their ability to have a voice, their ability to elect people into office, and their ability to have an effective way to function in the city. It seemed to her that all the neighborhood splits occurred in poor areas and where there were people of color. There is a large Somali community in Ventura Village and she would love them to attend the neighborhood organization meetings because their voice is important. She has heard that Somali people want representation in City Hall. But why split the neighborhood? As someone who attended medical school at a historically Black university, what is being done to Ward 8 is wrong. There is a long history of trying to disenfranchise African Americans, especially within Minneapolis. She asked that the map be changed to keep neighborhoods together that are actually making progress such as Ventura Village, Seward, and the Phillips so they can continue to do that.
- **q) Margaret Anderson Kelliher, 620 Morgan Avenue South**, stated that she was present as a citizen and a member of the Bryn Mawr Neighborhood and community where she has lived for almost 22 years. It is important to keep neighborhood boundaries as much as possible. There is no population is this particular area today but there are plans for future development and it really has to do with input in how that is used for the Master Plan. She was hoping that the Redistricting Group would reconnect the area in Bryn Mawr by putting it entirely in Ward 7. The City Clerk has told them that it is okay to create an empty precinct where there are no people today with the hope that this area does become developed. It is going to be an important part of the light rail development as well as the train changing station being proposed by Hennepin County.
- r) Mike Dean, Executive Director, Common Cause Minnesota, 2323 East Franklin Avenue, stated that over the last several weeks he has been talking with various community leaders and he wanted to summarize what he saw as some of the challenges the Redistricting Group will face. He wanted to encourage the Redistricting Group to not be afraid of making substantial changes to the current map. They have heard a lot of feedback over the last several days and there are still some significant concerns within the community on the proposed map. One of the challenges is that the Seward Neighborhood has raised significant concerns about being split up. They have a strong relationship with the East African community along Franklin. The Redistricting Group has a challenge where they are hearing from parts of the East African community that they want East Franklin in Ward 6, but the Group is hearing from the Neighborhood Group to keep it in Ward 2. That is one of the challenges the Redistricting Group will have to decide. Another thing to think about going forward is also having communities around major transportation corridors. There are three major corridors: the East Franklin corridor where there is a community of interest in the area, the Lake Street corridor with mainly the Latino community, and also 4th Street corridor which is mainly the African American community on the south side. In the East Lake community, the challenge there is going to be in Midtown Phillips and how to handle that. The most recent map splits it apart. If the Redistricting Group makes Seward whole, he thought they would have to move most of Midtown Phillips into Ward 9 which raises some concerns with what the East African community is proposing, but that is a decision the Redistricting Group will have to make. The Central Neighborhood has made a case to be part of Ward 8. In the conversations he has had with the Latino community, they thought it was okay to include Central in Ward 8. As they move forward,

he encouraged the Redistricting Group to feel free to change the map and put changed maps on the website as quickly as possible so the community can continue to monitor what is going on. It is critical that the process be as transparent as possible.

- s) Mubashir Jeilani, 1615 South 4th Street, stated that he lived in the Cedar Riverside Neighborhood. He was a spokesperson for the Cedar Riverside Youth Council. He supported the proposed map because it doesn't just unite the East African community, but will provide social justice and social equality for the entire neighborhood. Someone earlier said that there could be an East African on the council without redistricting, but they still don't have an East African person on the council. He was not saying there should be an East African person on the council, but he was saying the East African community should choose. The community knows what is best them. The proposed map will help the East African community. The largest number of Somalis in the United States reside in Minneapolis. Having their own majority as a ward will enable them to help the people who live in poverty in that neighborhood.
- t) Muna Ali, 1515 East 4th Street, stated that she lived in the Cedar Riverside community. She supported the proposed map. It is a good idea to unite the Seward, Cedar Riverside, Ventura Village, and Phillips communities.
- **u) Jen Wendland, 2620 Blaisdell Avenue South, Whittier Neighborhood**, thanked the Redistricting Group for keeping Whittier whole. It is something that is very important for the residents, the community workers, the businesses, and Whittier Alliance as a whole. As for the rest of the map, she supported trying to keep all of the neighborhoods whole as much as possible. In order to have full representation and the ability to express their voice and continue to work on building their neighborhoods, having one representative and one voice was crucial.
- v) Fadumo Dahir, 1600 South 6th Street, stated that she was not an immigrant; she was born in Minneapolis. She supported the proposed map because it will give her community an opportunity to be a part of the process. It is good that the Seward, Cedar Riverside, Elliot Park, Ventura Village, and Phillips neighborhoods stay together.
- w) Laura Jean, 2456 Harriet Avenue South, stated that she was a lifetime resident of South Minneapolis and a proud graduate of North High School. She has lived in the Whittier Neighborhood for over seven years. Their neighborhood is kept whole on the current map and she hoped it stayed that way. However, she was concerned about other neighborhoods being divided. Neighborhoods like Whittier face unique challenges that require consistency and continuity if they are to successfully address issues and work to support the diverse interests of their community. Dividing neighborhoods into two separate districts complicates working with their city and state representatives to insure that their voices are heard and their constituents are represented. Retaining the integrity of neighborhood boundaries is critical for a fair, equal, democratic process. Dividing any neighborhood up is a bad move, but it will be exceptionally challenging for neighborhoods such as Whittier that have some of the highest gaps in economic, education, and health care. Please keep Whittier and other neighborhood boundaries intact.
- x) Mike Goze, 3210 18th Avenue South, Executive Director, American Indian Community Development Corporation, stated that he personally and his organization are not supportive of the new map. They are supportive of the We All Win map that keeps the Phillips neighborhood as whole as possible. They feel that the community itself is better served with the representation of all people. He did not agree that bringing a bunch of people of one political or ethnic group into an area is advantageous to the community or to that group.

- y) Matthew McGlory, 1117 Sheridan Avenue North, stated that gerrymandering, if used politically to your advantage, is not necessarily a bad thing, but if the people who are representing you never really advocate for doing anything for you, then there is an issue. He lived in Ward 5. He knew that redistricting was very complicated. He suggested doing what the state of Iowa has done by taking redistricting out of the hands of individuals and placing the responsibility on a non-partisan type of mechanism. He suggested changing the map by Iowering Ward 4 and expanding into Ward 3 to include Washington. It is very important for North Minneapolis to have as much as they had ten years ago. He respected other people's culture, but it doesn't respect the Black culture in Minnesota, in Minneapolis in particular. He would like to see Broadway become a cultural corridor exclusively to African Americans/Black Americans. He disagreed with the proposed map. The top of Ward 4 should be moved down and part of Ward 5 should be extended out to Washington.
- z) Kenya McKnight, 1501 Emerson Avenue North, asked for remembrance for Trayvon Martin, a 17-year-old who was shot and killed in a racially motivated incident in Florida. Ms. McKnight stated that she had lived in North Minneapolis for 28 years. She was concerned about economic distribution. Redistricting is also a tool for economic development. This is about the distribution of wealth more than it is about population. Ten years ago, the North Loop was part of North Minneapolis which represented a segment of the Black community. Before the last redistricting took place, there was inadequate housing in North Minneapolis so money was garnered from the federal government and that money was used to develop part of what you see in the North Loop. After that the lines were redrawn and the North Loop was no longer a part of Ward 5. That move economically disadvantaged Ward 5 and she did not want to see that continually happen. But looking at the current map, it is happening again. Most of the North Loop is being taken out of North Minneapolis. This is about their right to have economic prosperity in their community. The economic development on West Broadway is being done by non-profit, non-tax paying entities. So Ward 5 does not greatly benefit from that. But they do benefit from the North Loop. Ward 5 deserves economic development. Most of the people that live in Minneapolis are working class people. They are not poor people on the welfare system. They contribute to the tax system and deserve equitable investment in their community. It is shameful that the state of Minnesota is leading this nation in disparities against ethnic communities. The proposed map furthers those disparities. She asked the Redistricting Group to think beyond political jargon, beyond lines, and think about real people and their lives.
- **aa) Jamail Abdulahi, Seward Neighborhood**, stated that he was a student at the University of Minnesota. He will never be able to pay the debt that he feels to the community. However he was speaking in favor of the idea of creating an opportunity in which a member of a historically disadvantaged community could be elected. The real question before the Redistricting Group is not about which specific map to adopt, it is about whether or not to keep the status quo or bring a real change. At the end of the day, it will be the Redistricting Group that makes those decisions. He asked them to bring real change to the city.
- bb) Clorasteen Wilson, 8th Ward, 41st & 5th Avenue South, stated that she bought her home in 1957. She has been in politics all her life and has been a delegate for 56 years and has worked wherever needed. African Americans have been mistreated in the city. She has worked hard for not only African Americans, but also for Somalis, Native Americans, Latinos, and White Americans. They have stood by each other, especially in South Minneapolis. They couldn't have done all they have done without other Americans. We need to stop thinking Black, White, Somali. At Sabathani last night, it appeared to her that everything was going toward the Somalis. They all thanked the Redistricting Group. It would have helped if the Redistricting Group had explained the reason for the splintering of all these groups. It could be

better for some people to be in other wards, but without an explanation they could not understand.

- **dd) Alan Dirie, 425 Riverside Avenue**, stated that she supported the proposed map. As a minority, they will be able to identify themselves with a certain representative that speaks for them as a people and they can start addressing their issues and issues that affect their children, schools, and health care. This will give them ability to affect future generations. She supported the proposed map.
- **ee) Abdirizak Bihi, 1530 South 6th Street**, stated that he supported the new map for Ward 6. Sixteen years ago he engaged the Somali community to get the vote out and has continued through every election. It has become a symbol of anger because those that they vote for never represent them, except on November 5 again. They are sick and tired of the status quo. They are very poor and have become poorer over the last two decades. Eighty-five percent of their young people do not work. They have no resources. Sixty-five percent of their American households are out of work. The poverty level is getting worse yet their community is located in the back yard of the University of Minnesota. They support the new map because they want to have a valuable voice in the city council and congress so they can translate their frustrations.
- **ff) Farah Roble, 1615 South 5th Street**, stated through an interpreter that he supported the new map. He has lived in that neighborhood for ten years. In the last five years he has voted. He also wants all the communities to be together. Their goal is to unite people. They are representing not only the Somali community, but the entire neighborhood. They are engaging their young people to be their representatives. Their goal is unity.
- gg) Mohamed Adan, 1530 South 4th Street, stated that he was a student and worked part time. He supported the new map. He had recently been hearing people say that Somalians are not assimilating into the American culture, being isolated, and not getting involved politically. He grew up in Kenya and Nairobi and could assure people that the Somali community in the United States is one of the most political he has seen. He has seen one of the strongest actions taken by the Somali community in trying to be part of the political system occurring now with their involvement in the redistricting process. By supporting their political ambitions, they are encouraged to be part of the system and to assimilate and have an incentive to vote and be part of the American dream, which they see as their voices being heard and their opinions being taken seriously. An immigrant to a new country feels like they have no friends. That is why they live close to each other and try to stay together. The new map will help them branch out and be part of the greater Minnesota community and have a voice.
- hh) Abdirahman Samatar, had signed up to speak but was not present when called.
- ii) Ahamdi Adan, 1515 South 4th Street, stated that she lived in the Cedar Riverside area. She wanted to echo what her brother had said that it is very hard for immigrants who don't have a voice and feel like they don't belong anywhere. This has been the important thing they have done to show that they belong somewhere. She supported the new map and having representation in government and being a part of this country in a better way and having a voice. Not just getting help from the government, but teaching their kids to contribute to society. They are doing this to try to unite their people so they can have a voice and so that they matter.
- **jj) Doud Hussein, 1515 South 4th Street**, stated that he was present in support of the new map. He had been a member of the Riverside Plaza Tenants Association for almost eight years. The new map will help the Somali community have a voice.

- **kk) Wendy Epstein, 2900 East 26th Street**, stated that she agreed with the map the Redistricting Group proposed in February. The new map was a radical change for the Seward Neighborhood. One of her objections was that fact that she didn't think that a lot of people even knew that the new map had been proposed. Another objection she had was that she kept hearing talk about unity, yet this map splits a working, well-functioning neighborhood in half. It makes no sense to split a neighborhood in order to create possible unity. For the last three years she has been surveying the history of the Seward neighborhood working on a book. After all the effort and energy that has gone into unifying the neighborhood and making it a functioning neighborhood they are now going to be split in half. She did not care what ward they were in. She would like to see equal representation on the city council for all people in Minneapolis, but to split a neighborhood like this makes no sense. Making this neighborhood work has taken decades of work.
- **II)** Osman Ali, 1630 South 6th Street, stated that he had lived in Cedar Riverside for the past 15 years and he supported the new map. This will help the community work to create better housing, schools, and health care systems.
- mm) Ilhan Dirije, 724 North Van Buren, stated that he was a student at the University of Minnesota and lived in the Cedar Riverside area. He wanted to express his support for the new map. It will give the Somali community a voice and allow them to elect a representative who will listen to their voice.
- **nn) Amal Dinye, 2220 Riverside Avenue**, stated that she worked in the Cedar Riverside area and had family who lived in the area. She supported the proposed map.
- **oo) Abdifatah Abdi, 1530 South 6th Street**, stated that the proposed map will help unite the Seward, Cedar Riverside, Elliot Park, Ventura Village, and Phillips communities. It will give the East African community an opportunity to believe in the American system.
- pp) Sheldon Mains, 2718 East 21st Street, Seward Neighborhood, stated that he was speaking on behalf of himself. The Redistricting Group has a hard job. They have a number of communities that want representation all sharing the same geographic area. The Redistricting Group is going to have to say no to everyone. No one will be able to get everything they want. The only way to be fair is to give everyone part of what they need. It was clear from last night's testimony that while the group in Cedar Riverside that wants a Somali opportunity ward, clearly doesn't represent all of the East Africans in Seward. From talking to his East African neighbors, they were not contacted until last night. After last night they received a barrage of phone calls. But that only happened when they came out against the proposed map. He suggested that the Redistricting Group go back to the February map and make tweaks to that map. He displayed the February Ward 2 and Ward 6 maps, as well as the most recent Ward 2 and Ward 6 maps. The Seward Neighborhood is connected to Cedar Riverside by five streets or pedestrian paths. Highway 94 is much less of a barrier than the industry, light rail, and Hiawatha Avenue. The February map had Ward 6 with about 40% Black population. That number could be wrong. From his work with the East Africans in the Seward Neighborhood during the census, the vast majority checked "other". He thought that was probably true for the Somali community in the rest of the city, also. He therefore thought the old Ward 6 could be much higher than 40%. The latest map increases that figure to only 46%. He urged the Redistricting Group to go back to the February maps and make tweaks from there.

- **qq)** Nadiira Farah and Samira Derie, 1601 South 6th Street, stated that they were part of the Cedar Riverside Youth Council. They supported the proposed map to give their community a voice to be heard in the political process. Seward, Cedar Riverside, Elliot Park, Ventura Village, and Phillips communities should stay together and have one voice and one representative.
- **rr) Gary Arntsen, 3050 Northeast Benjamin Street**, stated that he hoped the Redistricting Group listened to the testimony from the public hearings. After last night's meeting, people were talking about One Minneapolis One Read and how all this fits together. He lived in Ward 8 for 40 years before he moved northeast. To him the Central Neighborhood belongs in Ward 8. He did not know what happened between the February 29 map and today's map, but it has totally changed. He asked the Redistricting Group to listen to residents like Virginia Richardson from Central, Sheldon Mains from Seward, the people from Ventura Village and East Phillips and keep those neighborhoods whole that want to stay whole.
- ss) Shierh Mohamed, 1930 East Franklin Avenue, stated through an interpreter that he lived in the Seward/East Franklin area. He supported the current map and unifying Seward and the rest of the areas and giving the East African community a better voice in the city.
- **tt) Mohamed Derie, 1601 South 4th Street**, had signed up to speak but was not present when called.
- uu) Amina Nur, 1630 South 6th Street, stated that she lives and works in the Cedar Riverside area. All the East Africans are one, they are the same. They all support this. The East Africans have come here in the past ten years since the civil war broke out in their country and people can see what they have done. If given the opportunity, they can do better. They have charter schools, they are educated. They know they can do better if given the opportunity. If this map is approved, they can elect someone who represents them. They will hire more people and have more opportunities for everyone in the city, not just the East Africans. She was asking for the opportunity for her people to be given a chance and to choose their own place where they can all communicate together and be one and be heard.
- vv) Roger Worm, 712 West 40th Street, stated that he lives in the East Harriet Neighborhood, presently in Ward 10. Almost one-third of East Harriet is the cemetery. He has lived in East Harriet since 1976. He has been DFL Precinct Chair for 20 years. He retired from running a major business but still consults so he is intimately involved in the business association. He has been on the East Harriet Board and was still on the Crime and Safety Committee and the Housing and Business Committee. East Harriet is contiguous with Lake Harriet. East Harriet right now is divided between Ward 10 and Ward 13. East Harriet is almost two identities. The north half is a lot of high-rises and a lot of density. The south half as you get closer to the lake, there are about four houses to a block. He lives almost next to Lyndale Avenue but the neighborhood has more in common with CARAG and Lynnhurst than with anyone in King Field. Lyndale is a major barrier. Even though the new proposed map leaves north of 42nd Street in Ward 10, the proposal puts south of 42nd in Ward 8. He suggested putting West Calhoun into Ward 7, and putting south of 42nd back into Ward 13. From a business person's and a resident's point of view, the neighborhood has more in common with CARAG and Lynnhurst than they do with the other side of Lyndale.
- ww) Nasra Noor, 2910 East Franklin Avenue, had signed up to speak but was not present when called.

- xx) Carol Pass, 2536 18th Avenue South, stated that she was supportive of a lot of the things going on. She likes to see new people coming in and being a part of the process. She praised her Somali brothers and sisters in their efforts. However, she did think it was possible to benefit more than one minority group and possibly create more than one minority majority area. She would like to see more fair distribution of economic opportunity so that both groups can benefit. She would like to see some changes in Wards 6 and 9 so that there is mutual benefit. The most populated Latino area is in Midtown and because of that it will be very hard to get a fair distribution of population without moving that into Ward 9. She was supportive of seeing both groups having a new future that allows them a political possibility that they have not currently had.
- yy) Greg Moore, 35th and 4th Avenue, had signed up to speak but was not present when called.
- **zz)** Abdulkadir Warsame, 614 19th Avenue South, Lead Coordinator for the Citizens Committee for Fair Redistricting, stated that this is about voting. Institutions don't vote, commercial blocks don't vote. People vote. There is a lot of apathy in our system, but the East African community is a voting community. It is a community that wants to take part in the process and by giving them this opportunity ward, they will become more acclimated in the American system and the American way of life. They are not trying to take anything away from any other community. They are part of the largest minority group in the city and would like to have a voice to be heard. The East African community is highly motivated and highly cohesive. All Somalis are East African. He asked that their wishes be respected.
- **aaa)** Mariano Espinoza, 3120 12th Avenue South, stated that not including Midtown Phillips and including Longfellow in Ward 9 dilutes the electoral power of the Latino community. The White community will be the majority in Ward 9. Ward 6 is being created for the Somali community, but the Latino community won't have a chance to elect someone. He asked that Midtown Phillips be included in Ward 9.
- **bbb)** Marlene Rojas, 2425 Elliot Avenue, stated that she felt they had to keep repeating themselves because the Latino community is not being heard. She asked the Redistricting Group to put Midtown back into Ward 9 because there is a Latino community there. The We All Win map submitted creates an opportunity for communities of color. She asked the Redistricting Group to pay attention to her community's comments and concerns.
- ccc) Scarlett Lopez, 3028 Park Avenue, stated that she was 13 years old and wanted to express her concerns about the Latino community not being heard. She had attended a couple of hearings and noticed that the Redistricting Group has not made any of the changes suggested by her community. She had collected petitions from others. They are tired of coming to the hearings and listening to the same things being said, and they are tired of not being heard. She was the future of Minnesota. She didn't want to have to wait until she was old enough to make the changes herself. She asked the Redistricting Group to listen to her community and make a change now so they did not have to wait ten years.
- **ddd)** Mark Hoffman, 3648 Elliot Avenue South, stated that he wanted to echo some of the concerns about transparency about the process. There is a tremendous amount at stake politically in terms of the distribution of political power in the city. Two days of public hearings are not enough. There is no opportunity for debate. It is an egregious breach of democratic

process. The fact that the Redistricting Group had the opportunity to have four days of discussion and only took two of those days and truncated the discussion after two days by a vote of 8 to 6 is an egregious breach of democratic process.

Clegg clarified that discussion was not truncated. The Redistricting Group did not vote to stop discussion, they voted to adopt the map. There have been four days of public hearings.

Mr. Hoffman continued that he thought there may be violations of the Voting Rights Act, which he quoted as follows: "A violation occurs if a minority group does not have equal opportunity to participate in the political process and to elect candidates of their choice. The minority group is sufficiently large enough to constitute a majority of the population of the district and geographically compact so that a district with a majority of its members could be drawn. The minority group is politically cohesive, it would vote largely as a bloc for a favored candidate. Bloc voting by the majority population of the district typically defeats the favored candidate of the minority group (racially polarized voting)." He thought the Redistricting Group had to take this into account when drawing the final lines which will happen without much more public debate. He felt there needed to be more debate and conversation among the different "competing" communities. The debates should not be happening behind closed doors.

- **eee)** Hassan Hassan, 601 4th Street South, stated that he was from Cedar Riverside and he could have brought his community but didn't think there would be enough space. He was a full-time student. He supported the current map for his community.
- fff) James Everett, 1320 Oliver Avenue, stated that he was from North Minneapolis. Any parts of downtown that Ward 5 had once had were taken away and any revenue sources or taxes were taken away. No matter what happens with the maps, North Minneapolis needs to start at First Avenue. They need the river, and they only need two council people to represent the area. Speaking of communities of interest, the largest concentration of African American votes in the state of Minnesota is in North Minneapolis as well as 60% of youth under age 25. He was asking that the lines be drawn from First Avenue giving the northside a chance at any developments. Downtown can't go in any other direction than north. Every other culture has a cultural corridor. Also, in a strong council, weak mayor system, the 2500 votes they hold inside that ward give them their power. The redistricting needs to start at First Avenue and the entire northside should be represented by two council people.
- ggg) Jovita Francisco, 2529 13th Avenue South, stated that she had been a resident of Minneapolis for 16 years. She used to live in the Whittier area and works in the Phillips area. She was present to speak on behalf of the Latino community. She asked the Redistricting Group to keep the Latino community together and put Midtown back into Ward 9. Do not change the density of the Latino community or dilute the political power of the community. She wanted Midtown together in Ward 9 with Phillips and Corcoran. She asked the Redistricting Group to listen to their voice and make this change. The proposed map is dividing their communities. They want a community united together.
- 4. Close of Public Hearing
- 5. Announcements and Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

Peggy Menshek Redistricting Group Coordinator